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# COUNTER INFORMATION

NO. 24- AUG/SEPT/OCT 1989

## MASS RESISTANCE ROCKS POLL TAX

Nearly 4 months into the poll tax and in Scotland around 25% of the population have refused to pay. In England and Wales millions have refused to register. The poll tax - introduced to boost the power of central government and to benefit big business and the rich - is in trouble.

With tens of thousands still not even registered, by mid-July there were an estimated 800,000 - 1,000,000 non-payers in Scotland (*Scotsman* 13/6, *Scotland on Sunday* 2/7). Many more are in arrears. Such is the chaos in Strathclyde that by mid-July non-payers had not even received a warning letter. Attempts to start recovering unpaid poll tax might not start until December! In Lothian recovery attempts were not due to begin till 22nd September at the earliest. Over 50% of Londoners had not registered by the 21 days deadline. In Lambeth 75% had refused! In Leeds 60% had not returned the forms by mid-July.

**SHOOT THE SHERIFF**  
Several Scottish Regional Councils have sent in Sheriff Officers to seize the goods of people who didn't pay fines for non-registration. But anti poll tax activists have resisted....



EDINBURGH, 7th June : 40 anti poll tax campaigners invade Sheriff Officers Donald and Scott and auction off their possessions in an "anti poll tax warrant sale".

**GLASGOW:** 300 people gathered to greet the Sheriff Officers outside the home of Jeanette McGinn in Rutherglen on 4th July. When the state lackeys didn't show, the anti poll tax campaigners descended on the Sheriff Officers' city centre offices and occupied them.

**ABERDEEN:** In late April 70 people drove Sheriff Officers away from the home of a single parent. On 14th June police rescued Sheriff Officers surrounded by 100 protestors outside a flat in Victoria Rd..

**EDINBURGH:** In late April threats of massive resistance made at a mass delegation to a Council meeting forced

### STREET-WISE

To beat the Poll Tax, organising at street-level is vital. Following is an excellent example in North London: Tottenham Against the Poll Tax write: "We meet weekly aiming to make sure every local resident and worker is aware of what the Poll Tax means and how to defeat it. (mass non-cooperation). We aim for a Rep. in every street

(130 so far, our of 700 streets) and workplace (35 so far, mainly NALGO). In each of the 9 'wards', local Reps are holding public meetings to strengthen neighbourhood organisation. We have delivered 40,000 anti-registration leaflets to every household in Tottenham. A street presence is maintained by 3 stalls per week.

We now intend to put efforts into developing workplace and union involvement, as well as Tenants Associations and other community groups, whilst strengthening borough-wide (and London-wide) links".

Contact: TAPT, 72 West Green Road, London N15 Tel. 01 802 9804 (also contact for London Federation of Anti Poll Tax Groups, and thus for the 3rd Sept national meeting of anti-poll tax groups in London).

### BIN IT, BURN IT - DON'T RETURN IT!

That's how to deal with your poll tax registration form, say anti poll tax groups throughout England & Wales. Forms have been burnt at many anti poll tax bonfires, but the biggest blaze was in Islington, North London when the Poll Tax office burnt down in June.

have a policy of boycotting poll tax work and have - to date successfully - pressured the Council to refuse to install an adequate computer and to refuse to chase up non-registrants.

CPSA branches covering around 15 benefit offices in Scotland have voted to refuse to deduct the poll tax off non-payers benefits. In London workers in some Housing Benefit offices (eg mid-Tottenham) are refusing to give information for poll tax registration. And Camden teachers Association are campaigning for all schools to do likewise.

Following rumours at Edinburgh's Cameron Toll Savacentre that non-payers might lose their jobs if their wages were arrested, Prestonfield Community Resistance Against the Poll Tax and the Lothian Anti Poll Tax Federation pressured the company. The management was forced to write to all employees assuring them wage arrestment would not lead to the sack.

### WHAT NOW?

There is an important division within the 'Won't Pay' anti poll tax movement. The left-wing parties - and the many poll tax groups Militant especially dominate - emphasise convincing Labour Councils not to implement the tax (Militant's line) and pressurising the

Lothian Region to call off a planned warrant sale against John Holloway. On 7th June 40 anti poll tax campaigners invaded Sheriff Officers Donald and Scott and auctioned off their possessions in an "anti poll tax warrant sale".

The Lothian Anti Poll Tax Federation plans a mass protest at the Regional Council meeting on 29th August to demand the Council do not pursue non-payers.

### WORKPLACE ACTION

Poll tax work has been hit by the NALGO strikes. In Edinburgh and elsewhere anti poll tax groups have joined the strikers pickets and demos. Lambeth NALGO

T/SOR/4/1/44



#### PAGINATION

Trade Union hierarchy to call industrial action against the tax (Socialist Workers Party's line).

But there's another strand of the movement. This emphasises the self-activity of working class people and aims to develop sufficient grass-roots resistance in the community and workplaces to make the tax impossible to administer. This attitude is shown by many open independent anti poll tax groups, some with an anarchist / anti-authoritarian presence.

The differences between these 2 approaches will become more and more obvious. The time for appeals to Councils, Union leaders etc is running out - in

Scotland autumn / winter will see the (mainly Labour) Councils trying to use warrants and Sheriff Officers to collect the unpaid poll tax.

#### TIME TO CHOOSE

The anti poll tax movement will have to choose : either continue futile preaching in the deaf ears of Labour politicians, or develop as an autonomous movement in open confrontation with the law, Labour Councils and the state. Practically this will include - widespread physical defence of homes against Sheriff Officers - mass occupations of Council buildings - developing workplace self-organisation capable of fighting wage arrestment and attendant victimisation, outside the compromised Union

structures, and against the law.

IF this mass direct action develops, the anti poll tax struggle could spread into generalised community resistance to payment and debt enforcement (electricity, rent, food, etc.), and could merge with existing resistance to the police (especially in inner city England).

There could be a link-up with other wildcat workplace struggles.

Taking this optimistic scenario a stage further the struggle could develop towards a realisation that debt enforcement is a worldwide problem for the ruling class eg in South America.

It creates an opportunity to

undermine basic capitalist structures like money, legality and the state. This in turn strengthens the movement for a free and classless society.

But back to the here and now, and the fight against the poll tax is at a critical stage. Everything now depends on mass non-payment standing firm in Scotland, and a big enough movement growing to make mass non-payment a likelihood in England and Wales next year. We urge all supporters of mass non-payment to GET INVOLVED in grass-roots activity with a local anti poll tax group - we can give addresses for many areas.

Poll tax info packs for existing and would-be anti poll tax groups : large A4 SAE to Pigeonhole CR, c/o 11 Forth St., Edinburgh EH1.

## FIGHT BACK

FOR 6 days during July 'white collar' workers in local authorities across Britain took strike action and demonstrated against the Labour and Tory council employers' attempts to cut wages and conditions.

This was the first national strike by this group of workers. Despite a substantial minority voting against the action in a ballot, it was well supported and particularly solid in the Metropolitan areas. To that extent the action was successful and a step forward. But there were important weaknesses that will have to be overcome if we are to beat the employers.

#### OPEN MEETINGS

The action was dominated by the Union apparatus with the majority of workers remaining passive. Activists in Manchester for example organised their own regular meetings open to all strikers irrespective of Union or district, but this wasn't typical. NALGO the main union attempted to dissuade picketing out of the manual workers who have a similar claim of their own with the same employers - this must be challenged next time. Some tentative links were made with striking railway workers, but generally there was a lack of awareness of the common attack we are all facing (especially in the public services) and the need for a co-ordinated fightback. NALGO is now proposing further futile one day strikes

plus indefinite strikes of up to 5% of 'income earning' staffs. They along with the other unions are working hard to keep the public sector disputes separate and isolated.

The proposed action may win some minor concessions from the employers but it will never win the full claim of 12% or £1,200 essential to the nearly 50% of low paid workers in Council offices. A settlement for a straight 1 or 2% more will be a waste of time and will help drive down the wages of other public sector workers.

#### COMMON ATTACK

All workers are facing a common attack involving:-

1. Cuts in the real standard of living
  2. Undermining or abolition of national bargaining
  3. More flexibility in working conditions re more for less
  4. Cuts in jobs
- Underground workers, Council workers, ambulance workers, oil rig workers, workers at the BBC, engineers and many more are all in dispute at the same time. We need ALL OUT strike action extending rapidly to all those sectors to achieve a massive and immediate impact. This can only be organised by ourselves, linking across union and industrial divisions with common demands for:-
1. Large flat rate pay increases
  2. No job losses
  3. Maintenance of national rates and conditions
  4. No victimisation

## THE REFUGES ARE OURS!

Abused women from the Falkirk area in central Scotland held an emergency public meeting after hearing of Falkirk District Council's proposal to force the closure of Women's Aid refuges and slash their budget.

Plans are being made to provide a so-called "better service" by putting women fleeing from male violence in homeless persons accommodation.

More than 70 women gathered to confront the Labour councillors involved, in a great show of strength and determination to stop their plans.

As one woman said: "To actually believe that a council house on their own would be a better service than being with other women going through the same situation shows just how little you councillors and officials understand. We're horrified and angry."

"It will not be the last time a few men with a lot of power try to tell women what is best for us, taking little or no heed what women ourselves want or need. These men should be made to face the consequences of their actions..." said another.

The refuges are ours and we will fight to keep them!

Contact: Falkirk and Grangemouth Womens Aid, West Bridge St., Falkirk, Central Region, Scotland.

## CONSTRUCTASTRIKE!

At the beginning of July, one year after the Piper Alpha disaster, an indefinite strike was called for by the oil-industries construction workers, who say that safety and conditions haven't improved one bit since last July.

Twenty-one oil rigs came out on strike immediately and more followed. The oil companies (Shell, Texaco etc) tried to meet workers' demands with the exception of safety and union recognition, but BP also tried intimidation in actions such as cutting telephone lines to stop support spreading further, towing away an accommodation platform to "isolate" the workers who were having a sit-in, and BP also flew in scab labour to break the strike.

With the lack of union recognition the workers have now decided to spread the strike to "on-shore" sites such as Grangemouth - where the local workforce have responded favourably to the calls for solidarity. This is one way of letting the bosses know that safety should come before profits.

Together we can inflict a decisive defeat on the government & employers and build the strength to challenge the whole rotten system.

A Manchester Council Worker, 27.7.89.

STOP PRESS 3/8/89

Indefinite strike action is being taken by a small proportion of selected Council workers.



## A WORLD TO WIN

### McWorkers Unite!

Unions in Denmark are boycotting and holding actions against McDonalds because the multi-national 'fast food' company have refused the workers the right to organise. Construction workers refuse to work at building or rebuilding McDonalds restaurants. The unions also try to hit McDonalds at their supplies of meat, bread and milk and have stopped production of their 'milk' shakes.

The unions hope to involve the international Food Union to stop goods being delivered from Turkey, England and Germany. Source: Ekonomia Aarhus/Toronto

### LAND OR DEATH

Tierra Amarilla, New Mexico: On 5 June a large crowd marched from their encampments, to a courthouse

### IMF PROTESTS

London Greenpeace are calling for annual worldwide protests against the IMF/World Bank Congress. The IMF, along with western govts and multinationals, is responsible for millions being homeless and hungry in Africa, Asia and S America. This year the Congress is in Washington USA from 26-28 Sept. Info on protests etc: Greenpeace (London) 5 Caledonian Rd, London N1

In the town centre, which had been taken over in 1967 as a protest to land theft by "development" corporations. The encampment occupiers live in 5 bunkers with signs saying "Tierra O Muerte" (land or death) and are decorated with pictures of Emiliano Zapata - they are fighting for their land, which was given to them by the Spanish Crown years ago to be used communally and to be owned by the community in perpetuity.

## POLAND

Friday 21 April: For the past couple of months WIP (Freedom and Peace), the anarchist movement for an Alternative Society (RSA), and youth groups like 'Movement' have been conducting illegal Friday afternoon demos in Gdansk against a nuclear power plant called Zarnowiec (also called "Zarnobyl") being built nearby.

About 200 people participated in an action very much like "direct-action" demos in the West. There was no co-operation with the militia (cops) and no control by demonstration "peace-pig" marshalls trying to monitor the crowd.

The demonstrators militantly snaked their way through the streets of downtown Gdansk with the militia only occasionally barking out "disperse!" to no avail.

The march ended with a short rally in front of the town hall.

25 April: Over 100 people turned up for a rally at Warsaw University to protest a proposed anti-abortion law. The law would dump women who had abortions in prison for 3 years.

There were short speeches but it was mostly arguing and debate among the crowd. One woman gave a talk against the ban, noting women in the US are facing a similar situation and gave solidarity greetings from US women.

1 May in Gdansk reflected the major split in the Polish opposition. Pro and anti-Walesa forces had separate actions. Polish anarchists play a strong part in the anti-Walesa movement, together with radical fractions of Solidarnosc like 'Fighting Solidarity' or Solidarnosc 88.

On Monday the Walesa grouping met in a church and then marched hundreds strong to Old Town Hall. At Old Town Hall anti-government, anti-Walesa forces had illegally rallied. The Walesa crowd turned and were reportedly set upon by the Zomo (riot police) and dispersed.

Then about 400 radicals began a march along the same route. Zomo vehicles immediately appeared. The crowd pelted the trucks with rocks.

"At one point a cry went up something like "Let's go up Długa Street!" which is where the official CP celebration was happening. Just an unguarded stage with music & performances - without much of a crowd. By the time we got to the stage enough passers-by had joined in that we swelled to 1,000.

The CPers panicked! The stage was seized - we wrecked their May Day".

Source: On Gogol Boulevard. Info: Wolnosc i Pokoj, Klaudiusz Wesolowski, Ul Stupska 32/3, 80-392 Gdansk, Poland (Freedom and Peace).

## NOT ONLY WATCHES!



Above: the eviction of the Zwelerstr. squat in Zurich.

Our Swiss correspondent writes:

"That Switzerland is not only about cheese, cows, watches and international finance is proven once more by the latest events in Zurich, Geneva and Basle.

It is impossible to find a room to live in in Zurich or Geneva unless you can afford to pay an extreme amount of money. Despite the City Council using all its power to defend the speculators and the rich by means of evictions and the police force, a strong squatters movement has formed making houses to live in, not to speculate with. The beginning of July saw a huge demonstration which ended in riots.

In Zurich the police opened fire with plastic bullets and tear gas. One woman lost an eye and old people and children were among the injured. The demonstrators fought back - banks, insurance companies, porn cinemas, fur shops and police cars were all attacked. The police-demonstrator clashes lasted for up to 11 hours.

The movement in Basle is geared more towards the fight for an Autonomous Cultural Centre. Between April and June squatters were evicted from the main centres. Riots followed with police using tear-gas and plastic bullets fired at close range.

Our activities continue now "in exile" - on the streets and in public spaces. Switzerland can no longer be seen as that nice quiet little country producing cheese and watches!"

### NO MISSILE SITE!

Since April 1986 the people of Balaipal in Orissa, India have successfully thwarted state plans to set up a national missile testing range in the area. All entry points to the proposed site have been blocked. When an attempt is made to break the blockade, conch shells are blown, brass plates beaten and more people rush to defend the barricades.

In May 1988 hundreds lay down in front of vehicles when 5,000 armed police tried to enter the area. The people are even willing to die - forming a suicide squad in their determination to oppose the development.

If the site is established 100,000 people would be displaced, turned into

refugees, marginalised and pauperised. The struggle has succeeded so far because of the defiance of those who have everything to lose and nothing to gain if the state's plans are allowed to proceed.

Source: The Indian Post

### CAN'T PAY WON'T PAY

A wave of spontaneous strikes and demonstrations swept Italy this Easter in response to the imposition of charges for basic health services. Car, metal, textile and other workers took action alongside health workers.

### BRAZIL

In April and May Brazil was hit by a massive movement involving 2 million workers from different sectors and in different parts of the country.

In response to the austerity plan, announced by the Sarney government.



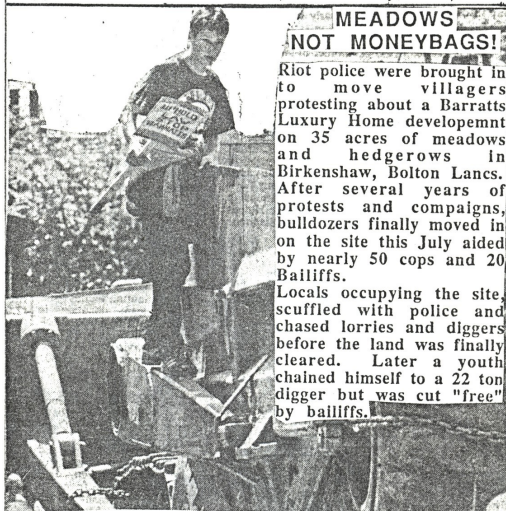
# CHINA :

## THE WRITING ON THE WALL

THE BELIEF that the State, Party and Army was responsive to 'the people' died, with the thousands gunned down in Beijing and other Chinese cities.

The occupation of Tiananmen Square had inspired "many citizens to abandon their fears. But now the protest movement started by a few students at Beijing's leading universities has turned into a movement embracing every sector of society, from squads of primary schoolchildren marching behind their teachers to grandmothers pedalled around in wheelchairs. Workers who had until then been afraid of arrest, began to show their support more openly.....they turned up from work units including secret arms factories and the offices of the central committee." (Guardian 18.5.89)

The 'crocodile tears' of the Western powers - "As long as the profits come, who's going to pull out?" (British consultant, Wall St. Journal) - was matched by virtual silence (Soviet Union) or support for their fellow butchers (East Germany, Cuba). The



## MEADOWS NOT MONEYBAGS!

Riot police were brought in to move villagers protesting about a Barratts Luxury Home development on 35 acres of meadows and hedgerows in Birkenshaw, Bolton Lincs. After several years of protests and campaigns, bulldozers finally moved in on the site this July aided by nearly 50 cops and 20 Bailiffs. Locals occupying the site, scuffled with police and chased lorries and diggers before the land was finally cleared. Later a youth chained himself to a 22 ton digger but was cut "free" by bailiffs.

## WHICH SIDE ARE YOU ON?

OVER 45,000 miners in America came out on strike at the beginning of July to show solidarity with striking miners in Carterton, Virginia.

The miners are out because the Pittston Coal Company wants to cut pension and medical benefits and also to start round-the-clock shifts with only Sunday mornings off, and also to be able to bring in contract labour "when necessary".

More than 2,000 miners have been arrested for "obstruction". Scabbing coal-lorries have been caught in "rolling blockades" where miners and supporters drive along in front of the scabs at 5m.p.h. slowing down coal shipments.

Almost 1,000 people now stay at Camp Solidarity near the pit, which the striking miners now hope will become a focus for

picketing and community solidarity.

LATE NEWS: A police bus full of arrested miners and supporters ran out of fuel on the way to the state prison, and not a single local petrol station would give them any fuel!

## PERESTRIKA!

"What is staggering is the fact that the miners showed such a high degree of organisation, without any involvement by the unions - This was one reason why they were so effective". So spoke a soviet bureaucrat about the very efficient and successful soviet miners' strike.

The miners in Kuzbass, W. Siberia, started the dispute over pay and conditions, food rationing, the economy - you name it!

real solidarity, demonstrated world-wide, was against the barbarism that all States reserve, the power to militarily massacre opposition.

## WORKERS ORGANISE

Amongst the first tents to be crushed in Tiananmen Square were those of the Autonomous Workers Federation. An eyewitness wrote : "They were angry at the wide discrepancy between the wages of workers and those received by the managers. They wanted to bring to public attention the corrupt bureaucracy and a privileged elite in China. They were concerned about the lack of workplace democracy, unsafe working conditions, and the declining living standards of workers. They wanted to put an end to the lack of freedom of speech, of information, of the press and of association in China. Above all, they wanted a union movement, independent of party and government control which could really and effectively represent workers." (Trini Leung, New Statesman and Society 30.6.89)

The unrest had been stimulated by a strike wave since the start of the year (see CI 22). The state is using the clampdown to victimise workers demanding improved pay and conditions, and to blame gangs of so-called "hooligans", unemployed youth driven off the land, as a counter-revolutionary force.

## PEOPLES ARMY MASSACRES THE PEOPLE

The resistance to the military clampdown spread throughout eastern China, in Shangai, Changsa, Xian, Canton, Wuhan, Hefei, Nanking, Changchun etc., and in Chengdu and Lanzhou uprisings were suppressed by public executions. The authorities acted to isolate the student movement in the cities, while in the countryside, 800 million peasants carried on unawares.

In Tibet and western China the Peoples Liberation Army has been continually used against colonised and subjugated people, as recently as March 1989 to quell the Tibetan 'intifada'. The belief of students and protestors that their own 'Peoples' army wouldn't be used to kill and suppress Chinese people was shown to be a 'blind faith' based on racist assumptions. The success initially when martial law was declared rested on the citizens of Beijing blocking the progress of troops. This tactic of passive resistance and fraternisation was overwhelmed by a determined planned military assault carried out by troops kept in reserve and unexposed to the popular mood generated amongst the citizens. Although confiscated arms were not used to resist the invasion force, there are Radio reports (11.7.89) of occupying troops being shot by isolated resistance in Beijing.

## ECONOMIC REFORM = MORE EXPLOITATION

The policies of economic reform, mass unemployment and enforced poverty, and collusion with Multinational exploitation, are increasingly unpopular in the cities. The refusal to 'sweeten the pill' of falling living standards by sanctioning even limited 'glasnost' could provoke resistance that will go beyond liberal demands for parliamentary democracy and create a movement for the realisation of direct democracy through social revolution. The design of Bush and western capitalism is to link loans and trade to liberal reform. There is a growing realisation, East and West, that demands for Democracy on the western model are a means to perpetuate exploitation and class rule.

In a week, 350,000 miners throughout the USSR were out. From Siberia to Ukraine and Rostov-on-Don in the South to Vorkuta in the North. Among the demands which were made (and later won) were;

- \* From July 1 wage increases of between 20 - 40%
- \* Two days off in a week for all miners
- \* Three year maternity leave for working women.

By 29 July 51 out of 121 miners in the Ukrainian Donbass region were still out, the strikers wanting

guarantees that the demands be adhered to by the state and that the demands should apply to all soviet miners. No wonder Gorbachov and co. were worried by this show of workers power!

## INDEPENDENTLY

Encouraged by the Cologne success healthworkers in more and more towns began to hold meetings calling themselves, for example, "We defend ourselves" or "Care Rebellion". In Bremen the people have thrown out the union leader and secretaries. Info: Vertriebsgruppe "wir wollen alles" c/o Besatztes Haus, Buntentorsteinweg 374, 2800 Bremen 1, W. Germany.



## SHELL BLOCKADED MONSTER MASHED

The Shell Research Centre in Amsterdam, just behind Central Station, was the scene of a mass protest against the monster multinational in April. Among other crimes Shell, through their massive involvement in South Africa, is a major prop for the repressive apartheid regime.

For 3 days there were people on the streets having demonstrations, performances, rallies and an extensive cultural programme. It became obvious that we couldn't really prevent workers getting to the building because the ME (riot police) were guarding the coaches they arrived in. There was fighting and teargas and there were injuries on both sides, but there was also a good feeling among the crowd (on the last day approximately 5,000!) about being there. It was all organised superbly - maybe a bit too pacifist, but that was the aim of the organising 'broad committee' (including trade unions, lefties, official Anti Apartheid groups).

Just before all this took place there were other forms of actions as well eg the sabotage of a couple of petrol stations at different places in Holland. Radical action against Shell is still continuing. Let's keep it that way!

## INSIDE INFO MARTIN FORAN TORTURE MURRAYS

In April Martin suffered a heart attack. Doctors say that another one will kill him. The authorities are giving him the wrong colostomy bags, and he was left for hours with shit pouring out of his belly, causing severe pain, for which he is being denied medication:

It is obvious that the prison authorities are denying Martin medical aid in the hope that he will simply fade away, helped by media indifference. WE CANNOT ALLOW THIS. Graffiti, publicise, raise money, etc.

Write to the prison governor at HMP Frankland, POB 40, Finchale Ave, Braxside, Durham DH1 5YD, England.

Letters of support to Martin Foran C51746 at the same address.

More about these and other cases is published in 'Inside Information', a supplement to 'Counter Information', produced independently. Send a stamp for a few copies.

### ET ON STRIKE

Workers in over 50 job centres and Employment Service Offices in London have taken strike action against the Employment Training Scheme (ET). The 26th June and 3rd July walk-outs were to stop this "work for your dole" scheme coming into the Civil Service.

Workers and the unemployed are fighting ET together. Greenwich Action Group on Unemployment, Barnsbury Claimants Union and the very active South East Region Anti Workfare Movement have initiated and participated in anti ET pickets of Job Centres, along with the strikers.

Marie and Noel Murray, who organised the Anarchist Black Cross in the 26 counties, and were jailed for life in 1975 for armed robbery, want to have a child before it is too late, and have gone to litigation.

It is obvious that the authorities are hoping that the Murrays will simply be forgotten about. Let's prove them wrong! Send the Murrays a letter or card of support.

Marie Murray, Mountjoy Prison, Dublin 7, Ireland.

Noel Murray, Limerick Gaol, Co. Limerick, Ireland.

Defence donations, case details from London ABC, BM Hurricane London WC1N 3XX.

## WOBBLY IN THE FRAME

John Perotti, who is trying to organise prisoners, has been framed for a stabbing.

Letters of support to: John Perotti, (167-712), POB 45699, Lucasville, Ohio 45699-0001, USA.

To take the all-out action needed to win the civil servants will need to defy their CPSA Union National Executive who are opposing the anti ET strikes. Meanwhile, the unemployed continue to resist coercion onto ET through Restart interviews, etc.. The government is around 111,000 short of their original target of 300,000 ET slaves every 6 months. Only 4 out of 10 referred to the scheme actually go on ET. And an estimated 80% of these starting ET walk out within 6 weeks.

Contact: CPSA, c/o Susan O'Shea, Job Centre, 4 Upper Street, London N1 ONW. Greenwich Action Group on Unemployment Tel 01 854 4989



Demonstrators blockade the gates of Detroit's new killer incinerator on 3 June to demand its closure. The incinerator will release millions of pounds of toxins every year into the air, ground and Great Lakes water system.

Info: Fifth Estate, PO Box 025448, Detroit, 48202, USA.

## AIDS ACTION

AN INTERNATIONAL network of people with AIDS, ARC, HIV positive and their supporters called ACT UP (The AIDS coalition to unleash power) has been making their presence felt. On 18th May the London group, protesting at the cuts in benefits and the 6 months means test for those with AIDS, tried to hand in a list of demands to the Social Security Minister at Whitehall.

Demonstrators entered the building and handcuffed themselves to, and blocked, the entrance. 30 more picketed outside. The DSS eventually agreed to meet a delegation on 22nd May.

In Portland, Oregon (USA) an ACTUP demo of 150 people forced the closure of the Food and Drug Administration office for the day. Demonstrators broke police barricades to enter the building, decorate the doors with red paint and blockade the office.

They demanded immediate free access to drugs which help those with AIDS and concurrent ARC treatments, with no placebos for those in AIDS drug tests.

Info: Ecomedia Seattle, FRFI.

## SCHEM-ING DOCKERS

On the 100th anniversary of the Great Dock Strike, the TGWU (Transport & General Workers' Union) leadership decided to give up the fight over the Government attack on the NDLS (National Dock Labour Scheme).

Dockers on the river Forth, Glasgow, Tilbury and at Liverpool and elsewhere were still out on strike when Union leaders voted to return to work.

Dockers' actions were on the point of escalating eg Grangemouth dockers picketing Invergordon to stop new "G" reg. Nissan cars being unloaded by unemployed scab labour, Liverpool and Tilbury dockers picketing ports where workers had returned under threat of redundancy and loss of pensions.

International solidarity was forthcoming.

In Amsterdam, dockers refused to unload a ship diverted from the UK and Belgian and French dockers were holding talks.

The action by their union leadership should not be seen as an ending to the dispute - but the beginning of a new struggle, with private companies who want the dockers to accept worse pay and conditions and longer working weeks.

To win these future fights dockers will need to rapidly spread strikes to all ports and beyond, disregarding the TGWU's craven obedience to the Tory government's anti worker laws on ballots and so-called secondary action.

The recent national strike was fatally weakened by the long delay before the action started and by the failure to spread the strike to the non-scheme ports. transport.



## PAGINATION RESISTING RACISM

Mixed fortunes on the anti-fascist front in recent months in the North of England. The NF flag group were prevented from holding their St George Day event in Rochdale in April when anti-fascists from across the North joined local opposition. The BNP faced opposition too in Leicester, just a couple of days after local nazi John Peacock had returned from a Hitler's birthday party to find his house gutted by fire. Opposition to the June BNP rally in Darlington though was poorly co-ordinated and despite being chased around the ringroad the fascists could claim the day as a success.

A fortnight later a massive police operation allowed the BNP to rally in Dewsbury, and then roam the town centre freely. Anti-fascists and local Asian youth were penned in and driven back into Savile Town by riot squads. The 'Scarborough' pub, a haunt of fascists, was badly damaged. There were 59 arrested and a defence fund has now been set up.

### KANPUR WORKERS WIN

35,000 textile workers in Kanpur, India blockaded the railway tracks from 22-27 February, demanding that a union agreed tribunal 'award' be scrapped.

The agreement would have meant increased workloads at the mills and the loss of 10-12,000 jobs.

The workers stopped all the hundred or so trains which pass through Kanpur daily. After their shift in the mills about 10,000 workers would squat on the tracks until the next shift took over.

Established trade unions repeatedly called for the lines to be cleared, but to no avail as the workers were organising themselves independently.

The government (who own 9 out of the 10 mills in Kanpur) argued that the workers' quarrel was with the mill management - not the Railways (also govt owned). Seeing the Capitalist machine as 'one thing' however, the workers ignored the authorities and after 5 days the state gave into the workers' demands.

Over 100 black people are being expelled from Britain every week. But people are acting together to combat this state racism - everyone should be able to live where they choose.

SAM MANNA of Moss-side, Manchester has won his fight to stay in this country after a 2 month battle with the Home Office backed up by a public campaign with strong local support.

FRANCIS OKANLAMI, supported by his union NALGO, has won his appeal

## HERE TO STAY

against deportation as the order was served illegally. Despite this he still has to report to his local Police Station and the Home Office are appealing.

Defence Campaign: tel. 061 834 6564.

### CHINA: GIRLS STRIKE

A GROUP of girls in Jui Cui village in Guangxi province in South China is striking because they are not allowed to go to school.

In rural China as in other rural areas of the world, children, especially girls, are kept at home to work rather than sent to school. 83% of the country's children who do not attend school are girls.

The girls, aged between 8 and 15, are refusing to do housework, work in the fields or take care of brothers and sisters unless they are allowed to go to school.

SOURCE: 'Off Our Backs'.

Another NALGO member, MARION GAIMA from East London, has defeated attempts to deport her to Sierra Leone. A Judicial Review found a 'case for political asylum'.

VIRAJ MENDIS and his new wife Karen are now virtually confined indoors and live in constant fear for their lives in Sri Lanka. Karen is in Britain at the moment to inform people of the situation and to help the campaign for their return.

Sonia Hughes, a black activist in Viraj's Campaign, was sent to prison for 28 days for police assault on May 11th after the appeal had acquitted 5 other activists who were white.

VMDC, c/o North Hulme Centre, Jackson Crescent, Hulme, Manchester M15 5AL

VICTORIA APETOR of Manchester - who has an 18 month old British born son - has been given a deportation order even though she came here legally. She is at present appealing for a Judiciary review of her case. After an active campaign BABAR HUSSEIN of Glasgow won his fight against deportation to Pakistan.

### STOP RACIST ATTACKS

Around 2,000 people, black & white, marched in Edinburgh on 3 June to protest against the growing tide of racial attacks & harassment in the Lothian Region and in particular against the racist murder of Ahmed Shek on 16 January.

Participants & organisers successfully resisted repressive police measures at this demo. Police attempted - but failed - to ban 2 banners with references to Ireland and to stop a Black Forum member shouting

FED UP OF BEING ORDERED ABOUT AND EXPLOITED? Sick of living in poverty while the profit system benefits a powerful few? Angry about men oppressing women? Disgusted at the many other injustices in today's society?

You're not alone. Lots of people round the globe are not only fed up, they're fighting back. In Counter Information we report this often-censored resistance, to encourage more such activity.

We stress the importance of people directly controlling their struggles, outside the control of political parties, trade unions or any leaders. Replacing one set of rulers with another - as has happened in the 'Communist' Party-ruled regimes, and as left-wing parties and national liberation movements want - is no solution. We encourage today's resistance to aim for the complete overthrow of all relationships whereby some people oppress others. The world's resources should be owned and controlled by all, and used to satisfy human needs.

The Counter Information collective invites people to - send us articles and information - take bundles of the news-sheet to distribute - make a much needed donation towards our printing and postage costs - write for info on our Readers Meetings and the CI Supplement - contact us if they'd like to join the CI collective. We wish to co-operate with all who share our aims.

COUNTER INFORMATION, PIGEONHOLE CL, C/O 11 FORTH ST, EDINBURGH, UK. For contact with CI in the north of England write: Red and Black, c/o Raven Press, 75 Piccadilly, Manchester.

### NAZIS KNACKERED

MAY 27TH: 200 anti-fascists, including many Asians, occupied London's Hyde Park speakers' corner, to prevent a rally of Nazi skinheads from all over Europe, congregating to be told the secret venue of the Nazi band Skrewdriver's concert.

Fortunately the fascists turned up at Hyde Park in small groups which were met with a barrage of abuse and chased away. Some were beaten up and had to be rescued by the police. The fascist rally did not take place.

Though the Skrewdriver gig went ahead, only 400 of the expected 1,200 Nazi thugs managed to find it.

### TORIES CHASED

In early June during the by-election campaign in central Glasgow, a group of 10-12 naive Tories decided to "campaign" in and around "ra Barras", Glasgow's working class market. Amongst shouts of "Piss off" and "Awa' and bile yer heid" the Tories failed to give out very many leaflets!

As crowds gathered round to see this rare Scottish species, the Tories became more worried - and eventually started walking faster, and then to RUN - with a large section of "ra Barras" punters in hot pursuit!

A similar incident occurred on the June 24th anti poll tax demo in Glasgow, when 2 young Tories tried to give out leaflets. A group of Woodlands anti poll tax activists, anarchists and enraged local youth chased the toerags into the local Anderston cop shop!

AUSTRIA - February: An 'Eat the Rich' demo against the annual festival at the Viennese Opera House ended with demonstrators fighting riot cops who were guarding the rich opera fans. A good seat at the festival costs as much as an Austrian worker earns in a year.

slogans through a megaphone. Police harassment of people collecting for demo expenses was publicly denounced at the post-demo rally.

Info: Lothian Black Forum, c/o 12 Picardy Place, Edinburgh

### ARGENTINA

May '89: A state of emergency was declared in Rosario, Argentina's second largest city to quell huge food riots where people raided shops and supermarkets. The people took to the streets after the government announced emergency measures aimed at curbing hyperinflation said to be 70% in May alone.

Dozens of similar riots were reported from other major Argentine cities.



# COUNTER INFORMATION

NOV/DEC/JAN 1989 - 90

# WE ARE WINNING



ANTI POLL TAX DEMONSTRATORS BLOCKADE A ROYAL MAIL VAN LOADED WITH COUNCIL POLL TAX DEMANDS

Six months into the poll tax and 650,000 people in Scotland have made no payments whatsoever. In addition to this an estimated half a million others are two or more months in arrears - giving a combined non-payers/in arrears total of over 25%.

Lothian Regional Council state that by the end of September 96,000 final notices had been sent to Lothian's non-payers. With an estimated additional 20,000-30,000 non-payers on rebates yet to be sent final notices, that means around 20% of those registered haven't paid a penny! Plus thousands of people who aren't even registered. An extra 79,000 people are 3 or more months in arrears giving a staggering non-payers /in arrears total of 35%.

In Strathclyde 236,000 final notices to non-payers were sent out in late October. Another 300,000 people were in arrears, but were still to be sent reminders as their bills needed adjusting. So over half a million people in Scotland's biggest Region, around a third of those registered, either haven't paid or are in significant arrears.

Actions against Councils are keeping the councillors in the public light - most Councils in Scotland are controlled by the "socialist" Labour Party, who are threatening non-payers with the slogan "pay up and shut up".

T/SOR/4/1/14

## HUMPTY DUMPTY FALLS

The unthinkable is happening. 'Humpty Dumpty' has fallen and the wall itself is cracking under the strain of East German 'People Power'. The unfreezing of travel restrictions on 10th November, a desperate act by a decomposing 'Communist' Party, poses fundamental problems for Western governments who may have to impose restrictions on immigration and risk losing their superficial appeal as bastions of 'freedom'.

For a world without boundaries is the radical response of people unwilling to have their freedom curtailed by outmoded 'Cold War' power designs. The symbolic end to the 'Wall' and armed frontier offers the possibility of a movement that refuses to be manipulated by nationalist, parliamentary and consumerist icons.

The following are participants accounts of what a good day out can be like!

### Strathclyde Stramash

"On 15th September over 200 protestors stopped a pointing from taking place in Barrhead, Renfrewshire. As expected the sheriff officers didn't show up, and determined to make their point a busload of the people made their way to the offices of the Strathclyde Regional Council in Glasgow. They occupied the building and demanded assurances that no further attempts would be made to point or sell people's goods. Too cowardly to address the crowd, council officials requested that a delegation be sent to their offices, but were met with cries of "Speak to all or none! We are a delegation - a delegation of the one million non-payers!" Needless to say, the Council refused.

A fortnight later, 1,000 people marched through Glasgow to lobby their councillors yet again, at their India St. HQ. Jeannete McGinn speaking after the demo said "My patience has ended with the Council.....we have now entered the class war."

On 12th October a very successful occupation of Sherrif Officers Gray Scott & Co., Glasgow was carried out by the Strathclyde Anti Poll Tax Federation in solidarity with Mrs Jean Paton, a Paisley resident who had been pointed for her husband's non-registration fine, even though he no longer stayed with her. Protestors came prepared for a long stay, determined to get results, and after 3 hours the Sheriff Officers agreed to return Mrs Paton's 'case' to the Council for reconsideration. The case has since been dropped."

### Capital Commotion

"On 20th September around 70 of us crammed into the Lothian Regional Council chamber in Edinburgh. We heckled as the ruling Labour group said they would collect the tax, and could not rule out warrant sales. Only 2 Labour councillors supported non-collection.

Just before the vote, the Chair adjourned the meeting, falsely claiming that the speakers could not be heard. We occupied the Council chambers.

With the Council meeting abandoned, we discussed our next move. We decided to invade the nearby poll tax payment office. We talked to the staff there, getting some positive responses. The office entrance was blockaded and a sign erected "CLOSED DUE TO MASS NON-PAYMENT".

On 3rd October the Council resumed their abandoned meeting. When they voted in favour of collecting the poll tax demonstrators took over the Chambers, drowning out the councillors with chants and songs.

The councillors fled. But this "left-wing" administration quickly brought in the police to clear the people out of a "public" building.

Next, we spotted a nearby Royal Mail van being loaded with Council poll tax demands! We rushed over, tried (unsuccessfully) to persuade the posties not to load the letters, then blockaded the van. The police eventually cleared us.

But we weren't finished yet. We piled into the poll tax payment office. This time we defied police threats of arrest and held our ground. After half an hour we left under our own steam - but we'll be back!"



# GUATEMALA

The Mexican daily *La Jornada* reports that in the first 6 months of 1989 1,500 people in Guatemala have been murdered, 800 kidnapped and 2,500 wounded by state death squads.

Against this background women are fighting back. An organisation called Conavigna, consisting of women widowed as a result of state repression, was formed in September 1988.

In Guatemala the majority of women work at home, look after children, have no basic rights, no education and work outside the home only in exchange for food to survive.

Conavigna aims to fight for women's rights and for the \$10 million international aid which has been received for women and children who have suffered from the repression.

Conavigna report that the state has distributed some corn and beans to a few women in exchange for promises not to go on demos, not to organise themselves and not to agitate for the return of their missing relatives. The state media also spread the lies that all women had received the necessary aid

and the Conavigna was disbanding.

The state sees the women as a powerful threat and the army has threatened to kill women if they join the organisation. But the women will not be terrorised, they seek recognition to put international pressure on the state to stop its regime of terror and to grant them basic human rights.

(Info: TAS, TAS, Spain)

## GAY SELF DEFENCE

In response to a growing number of attacks directed against San Francisco Gays, local activists have banded together to form the Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Self Defence Institute, which offers training in all kinds of self defence.

Fears are growing that these attacks are part of an organised wave of terror coordinated by fascists. In July 200 gays and lesbians and supporters chased nazi skinheads off the streets.

GLB Defense Inst., 1525 Franklin St. San Francisco CA 94106

# OIL STRIKE

Quito, Ecuador - In September a national state of emergency was declared and troops ordered to take control of oil installations during a strike by Texaco workers who operate the country's main pipeline.

The troops were ordered to 'dislodge' Texaco workers who occupied installations after launching an indefinite strike that has halted oil pumping and shipments.

The Lesbian and Gay Freedom movement has been set up in London to bring the issue to the forefront and take anarchist ideas to Lesbians and Gays.

LGFM, BM Box 207 London WCIN 3XX

## DEWSBURY

The 82 people arrested in June for their resistance to fascist and police intimidation now have a support group. For donations, solidarity and info contact: Dewsbury 82 Defence Campaign, c/o Kirkley Black Workers Group, 24 Westgate, Huddersfield.

## NO ARMY

Recently struggle against national service has escalated in Spain. Hundreds of young

identified the non-payers and the waverers. Then we initiated a notice board on the street to give up to date information on the campaign.

There are 24 non-payers in the street and we are committed to helping each other out if there is any action taken against any one of us.\*

Contact: Elizabeth Burns, 28 Glen St., Tollcross, Edinburgh.

As we went to press occupations of sheriff offices throughout Scotland were planned for 13th November.

## Snoopers Snookered

In England and Wales resistance to registration is continuing.

A testing ground for poll tax snoopers was laid at Armley, Leeds, to see how long it would take to canvass the area for registration. The snoopers knocked on 50 doors and got 3 replies. The result was that it would take 7 years! The idea was scrapped.

In late October hundreds of DSS workers in London walked out in protest at being asked to snoop on claimants and help register them for the poll tax.

Workers at the Oval DSS office in south London struck for the whole week. DSS workers at Bloomsbury, Kensington, Crystal Palace, Greenwich Park and Hither Green offices walked out for a day.

## The Challenge From Below

A resolution by Aberdeen against the Poll Tax highlights the widespread concern at the executive powers that the proposed British Anti Poll Tax Federation will have.

Like all prospective leaders and rulers, 'Militant' is obsessed with capturing executive positions, controlling the flow of information and organising us like an 'Army' subject to commands filtered through the 'Ranks'.

Events in Scotland prove this is not the way to fight the Poll Tax. When it comes to the crunch of sheriff officers threatening pointings without '4 day warnings' and simultaneously trying to terrorise refusers, it is vital that thousands are mobilised by local groups to resist sheriff officers, and not to rely on a hand-picked 'flying picket' of Federation Militants.

To undermine the capitalist system, a revolution must come 'from below' and the way we organise will help create a more challenging and self-determining resistance.

Would groups around the country let us know how the anti poll tax movement is going in their area. Groups from outside the central belt in Scotland and groups from England and Wales especially encouraged! A new paper for independent anti poll tax groups in Strathclyde can be contacted at: Refuse and Resist, 2/3 182 Ark Lane, Glasgow G3 2J5. Highly recommended.

Anti poll tax info packs from Community Resistance to the Poll Tax, pigeonhole CR, c/o 11 Forth St., Edinburgh EH1. Send a large SAE.

# BLOWOUT

2 issues of an independent paper for offshore oil workers have been produced since July. The stimulus is the anger widespread after the Piper Alpha disaster and the inability of Unions to prevent further abuses of work practices by Multinational Firms.

An Offshore Information Centre above the Criterion Bar at 52 Guild St. Aberdeen supports the initiative of the workers who produced BLOWOUT. An indication of the discontent rife in the industry was the stoppages on 31st October and 1st November by Catering Workers challenging the divide-&-Rule imbalance of wages & conditions. 35 North Sea installations were shut down as part of fortnightly co-ordinated actions.

people are becoming total refusers i.e. not joining the army and also refusing the new alternative military service brought in to solve the 'problem'!

Objectors have organised demos and presented themselves in large groups for arrest. But the state - even if they arrest two or three at first - have always backed down after more demos etc.

# A WORLD TO WIN

## DAM STOP

Harsud, India - at least 40,000 people demonstrated on the 28th Sept against a planned river dam project that would wipe out farmland and forests and leave about one million people homeless.

The participants live along the Narmada River. They joined hands to form a four mile human chain to symbolise their determination to save Harsud and 572 other villages that will go under water if the four major dams and 3,000 smaller dams are built on the 800 mile river.

## LEST WE FORGET

State terrorism continues in south Africa despite President De Klerk's efforts to allow ANC rallies and pass himself off as a 'Reformist'. 17 hangings of prisoners have taken place in the 5 weeks after the white election. 3,000 political prisoners remain imprisoned, and the police still possess extraordinary powers of arrest and detention without trial.

## WILD.

Residents of Oviedo, Florida have begun sabotaging construction equipment to protest against the turning of a wilderness into a golf course on the Econlackhatchee River.

Twice a month bulldozers have broken down with sugar in their fuel tanks.

These actions are warned to be only the beginning. (Info: Ecomedia London)

## ITALY

The authorities evicted, and then immediately demolished, the Leoncavallo Social Centre in Milan in mid-August.

Police clashed with autonomists as they defended the Centre, for 14 years a base for grass-roots struggles and alternative cultural activities. Police arrested 26 people. In Berlin a solidarity demo demanded their release.

Now the fight is on to rebuild Leoncavallo, part of a country-wide network of self-man. social centres.

## NO PARDONS

Argentina: 40,000 people marched down Buenos Aires avenues on 8th September to protest against possible pardons for military men accused of human rights abuses. Similar marches were held in other cities.

## SHELL

Sweden  
A list 'obtained' from Swedish Shell's Security Department shows that between 31/7/86 and 12/4/89 there have been at least 174 attacks on their filling stations because of its involvement in South Africa and the Lubicon land.

# WE ARE WINNING!

## Aberdeen Action

\*On 24th October 60 demonstrators occupied the offices of Grey Scott & Co., Aberdeen's Sheriff Officers. This was in response to a pointing for non-reg ration which had occurred in Macduff. The victim was a 67 year old widow. Such was the cavalier attitude of the Sheriff Officers, Davidson and Davy, that two of the three items were illegally pointed; a three piece suite and a kitchen unit.

The unleashing of Sheriff Officers is solely geared to instil fear among poll tax refuseniks. However in this case their strategy foundered. Those occupying Grey Scotts refused to leave until the pointing was lifted.

Of the three pointings Aberdeen Against the Poll Tax have been involved in none have gone ahead. We have dogged the steps of Sheriff Officers, who have been given carte blanche by a particularly callous Regional Council, intent on being first at Rilkind's door with poll tax booty. Our 14 day notices were sent out weeks ago, so we fully expect an aggressive move to break the back of the non-payment campaign.

One final point: it is important to read the Debtors Scotland Act. The Act has as many loopholes as a string vest, and resisters should know and be able to exploit these.

Aberdeen Against the Poll Tax : 0224 625562 10am - 5pm Mon.-Sat.

## Terrific Tollcross

Equally, if not more important than the city-wide co-ordinated direct actions, is the creation of strong organisation in the community, right down to street level.

The following from Tollcross, Edinburgh shows such an example:

\* The Glen St/Lauristons Anti Poll Tax Street Committee was set up to organise resistance to the tax and to provide information and advice to residents. By specifically targetting the few streets hereabouts and holding regular informal meetings we were able to draw in many new faces.

Early in the campaign we informed all local residents of the imminent arrival of the poll tax snoopers. On the day they arrived we activated our phone tree and had 10 people following the canvassers showing our disapproval. Intimidated by this resistance the snoopers posted the rest of the forms for our area.

Our most successful event was the street party. About 80 adults and children gathered to celebrate with musicians, a face painter and non-paying local councillors.

Now we are giving support to those threatened for non-payment of the tax. Firstly we canvassed the street and



## SAN FRANCISCO POLICE RIOT

This summer homeless people created a shanty town in the US plaza in front of San Francisco's city hall. By mid July hundreds of people were living there. Many erected plastic and cardboard shelters, watched each others gear and kept an eye on anti-social elements like the San Francisco Police Department. (S.F.P.D.)

Also involved was the peace group "Food Not Bombs", who distributed free hot food each day. The plaza was renamed Tennant Square by the people who had created their own community there.

Soon SFPD riot squads were harassing and even arresting people "for service without a city health permit". The permit

cost several hundred \$, and the alternative for people was to go back to eating out of garbage cans.

Imagine one of the richest cities in the world using riot cops to arrest people for giving away food!

On July 20th up to 100 riot cops charged across the square in the early hours of the morning. After forcibly moving people out - they confiscated and destroyed anything left behind. Many people lost everything they possessed.

Still people came back despite increased 'policing'. When the cops moved in for arrests the people serving food would be protected and several arrests were foiled. A group of young people chased out a cop van with bottles and stones. The final act of public defiance (as far as we know) was on 26 July when several hundred people marched through downtown SF giving away food as usual. Some one was arrested for "inciting a riot" but was later released. Police intimidation resulted in less people living there through fear for their own safety.

Unfortunately SF is not the first city to use cops against free food projects. Santa Cruz, CA and New York city have also done the same recently.

## A CHIP OFF THE BLOCK

1st November: 4,000 marched in Sofia, Bulgaria in the first opposition demo called by 'Ecoglasnost' after earlier round-ups of street pickets. In Prague, Czechoslovakia 10,000 marched on 28th October in defiance of brutal repression by the embattled Stalinist State.

## MURDERED

In August E. Gerry Horgan a member of the "Communication Workers of America" was run down and killed by a scab driven car whilst on picket duty.

The 60,000 strong strike continues against NYNEX in New York and New Jersey. (Info: Anarchist Labor Bulletin)

## DYING TO STAY

About 7,000 demonstrated against deportation in London in October, after an imprisoned Kurdish refugee, Siho Iyigven, burnt himself to death at the Hamondsworth immigration detention centre rather than be returned to Turkey. After the suicide the Home Office released all 25 Kurds held in Handsworth, but 30 fellow refugees in Haslar detention centre had to threaten suicide in order to be allowed to attend Siho Iyigven's funeral.

3,500 Kurdish refugees, fleeing torture and harassment, arrived in Britain in May and June before the Tories slapped on a racist visa requirement - an effective ban on entry. So far 150 of those who arrived before the ban have been refused a stay, 35 have already been deported. The Home Office has classed them as 'economic refugees'. Many tell of being tortured in Turkey, by electric shock, burning cigarettes, high-pressure hoses and beatings on the soles of the feet.

The demo saw the first joint action of diverse Turkish immigrant groups, including the Union of Turkish Workers, who also picketted the Home Office. Further actions are planned.

## MINERS OCCUPY

UMW Coal Miners in Pittston, Virginia, USA have been on strike since April 5th. It is still going strong. The Courts and Capitalists are trying very hard to smash the strike - over 1,000 billion dollars have been levied in fines etc. The Government's determination has been met with commitment to win this battle.

It's planned to officially recognise the 42,000 miners who 'unofficially' walked out in June in Solidarity.

Even the union bureaucrats now see the strike as a life or death issue, despite their original denunciation of the wildcat strikes.

The miners are not giving in and support is coming in from all over. There is a site (Camp Solidarity) set aside for visiting workers helping with pickets or civil disobedience.

Militancy is growing on the picket lines - company trucks are often stoned. In Boomer County miners crossed into a company compound and

ejected some hire heavies from the area.

On 17th September 98 miners surprised company thugs and occupied a Pittston coal preparation plant in Carbo, Virginia. Being outnumbered and outwitted the security guard fled. By nightfall there were 2,000 supporters blocking the gate to the plant.

The plant was held for 3 days - stopping all coal production. Immediately after a U.S. Federal Judge ordered an end to the occupation, 5,000 people rallied outside the plant.

The occupation was a complete success, the ability to mobilise large numbers of people at very short notice, a move away from the tactics of civil disobedience - this time there were NO arrests. This occupation looks like the first of many.

Support is needed in whatever form to Justice for Pittston Miners, UMW District 28, POB 28, Castlewood, VA 24224

## REVOLUTION FROM BELOW

Miners in pits in Vorkuta, Siberia signalled their defiance of the new Labour decree on 25th October. They followed an earlier walkout by miners in the vast Mezhdurechensk area, where the June mass action originated, to force implementation of concessions made by the government in July. 41,000 miners and 16 mines in Vorkuta and Inta are involved and the threat of escalation to central Siberia and the Ukraine is imminent if the "exceedingly slow pace of improvement" does not change.

Simmering discontent has also surfaced in the Donbas basin in the Ukraine, and in both areas reports have come of independent miners unions being formed in early September. The miners are in the strongest position to defy the bans on the essential sectors of Coal, Gas, Power, Chemicals, Metallurgy and Public Transport ratified by the Supreme Soviet in early October. The 'revolution from below' is becoming a more potent force for change, challenging austerity, than Gorbachov's ailing Perestroika from above.

## RAILOADED

John Perotti of the Wobblies' Prison Organising Project, battling Ohio Penal Industries over prisoners' rights and working conditions, was tried in August on a phoney stabbing charge. After a month on hunger-strike, he was kept in hand-cuffs and leg-irons throughout the 3-day trial, as were defence witnesses. Each had 2 extra armed guards in addition to John's 5.

The right-wing judge denied all defence motions and requests from the jury, whose foreman was an ex-prison employee. Another prisoner openly admitted to having committed the stabbing.

Despite this John Perotti was found guilty and given the maximum of 12-15 years incarceration. Returned to prison, he was viciously attacked by the guards. Fellow prisoners, alarmed at being moved from the block and leaving John alone, rioted and diverted the situation.

He has only a short period in which to lodge an appeal and desperately needs funds. John writes, "They gaoled me when I was 19 for a \$7 robbery. I am now 34. They continuously give me more time because of my activism. I must fight this conviction." Please send donations to:

John Perotti Emergency Appeal

c/o Counter Information

Writer: John Perotti (167-172) P.O.B. 45699 Lucasville, Ohio 45699-0001, USA

## ENDEAVOR PROJECT

'Endeavor' is a paper produced by prisoners on Texas Death Row, a tribute to the human spirit and a searchlight on capital punishment. Available for donation from 'Endeavor' PO Box 23511, Houston, Texas 77228 - 3511, U.S.A.

More about those and other cases is published in the 'INSIDE INFORMATION' news-sheet - write to Counter Info for a copy, send a SAE. Prisoners need only send their address.

BOOKS FOR CHANGE

Over 1,000 available anarchist and related publications are reviewed in A.K.'s new catalogue. Large SAE to AK Distribution, 3 Balmoral Place, Stirling, Scotland FK8 2RD



## INSIDE INFO

## THE UGLY FACE OF BRITISH JUSTICE

The release of the innocent Guildford 4 (which closely followed the disbandment of the West Midlands Serious Crime Squad, and the suicide in gaol of a Kurdish political refugee) shook the bourgeois media into a frenzy of worry about 'injustice'. The latter two incidents were largely ignored, but some mention was given to the equally innocent Birmingham 6, mainly by Gerard Conlon, one of the freed 4

very same squad who fitted up another Irishman, Martin Foran, on an armed robbery charge.

Martin's condition in prison continues to deteriorate, still being denied treatment. Supporters of Martin recently demonstrated/leafleted in many British cities and in Antwerp and the campaign is growing.

This is a country where it is a 'crime' to be coloured or Irish, according to the racist Tories. Silence is agreement. We must put the pressure on.

Martin Foran, CSI 746, HMPP, Frankland, POB 40, Finchale Ave, Brasside, Durham DH11 5YD

## NO SHIT

A massive long-term rubbish dump is to be sited outside Walton Prison in Massachusetts, USA. A prison activist writes: "Society dumps all its refuse in one pile. Poor people, deprived of everything, even of fresh air. Solidarity with prisoners inside Walton is being voiced in other U.S. prisons now like spreading fire."

For further info: Action Committee, PO Box 316, Norfolk, Massachusetts 02056 or PHIL SCALICE 278901, PO Box 900, SHELTON, WASHINGTON 98584.



# TAPPING RESISTANCE TROOPS OUT

In the Republic of Ireland a mass movement of residents is refusing to pay the water rates tax. For months residents have been defying government threats to cut off the water supplies of non-payers.

In Waterford local government workers refused to disconnect residents' water. When the local authority brought in private contractors, residents resisted, despite arrests and fines.

On 27th September 30 women and a man in a wheel-chair blocked the path of a contractors van just after the contractors had cut off water on the Lismore Park Estate, Waterford. Despite a large police presence the original protestors were joined

by workers leaving the Waterford Glass Factory.

As word spread the crowd swelled to 1,000 and the contractor's van was completely surrounded.

After negotiations with the Combined Residents Association, Corporation officials agreed to postpone further cut-offs for 3 weeks and to stop using the private contractors.

The mass blockade ended at 11pm, after 8½ hours successful direct action. The struggle looks set to continue! (Info: Republican News)

We appeal to Irish readers to send info on this struggle. And we wish to encourage direct contact between the residents involved and anti poll tax groups in Britain.

## "WE WILL NOT GIVE IN"

On 26th September over 200 women took part in a demonstration in Falkirk in central Scotland in support of Womens Aid.

While Falkirk District councillors held their meeting, women gathered outside to protest at the ruling Labour group's decision to take control of Womens Aid refugees.

The mood was one of sorrow but also of great anger. As one Womens Aid worker told the protestors "This is not the end, only the beginning. We will not hand back the keys. We will not give in."

## ACTIVELY RESISTING HARRASSMENT

Claimants country-wide are resisting the oppressive new Social Security Act. This Act means - claimants must prove they are "actively seeking work" - after a 'permitted period' of 1 - 13 weeks claimants should accept jobs outside their usual line of work and at less than usual pay - the authorities have more powers to suspend benefits. 200 new 'Claimants' Advisers' will conduct spot-check interviews when claimants sign on.

The South East Region Anti Workfare Movement write: "The increased harrassment of claimants is desinged to push us into the clutches of sweatshops and slavedrivers, forcing down pay and conditions everywhere."

The fightback against the Act began with a Week of Action from 9-14th October, including a demo at the Employment Services Central London H.Q.

To resist the new measures claimants groups advise:

- Always go to a Restart or similar interview accompanied by a friend or Claimants group member.

- Remember the Employment Training Scheme (ET) , Job Club, etc are still voluntary.
- You can show interviewers lists and copies of job 'applications' - if you 'apply' to large employers it will be very difficult for them to check up.
- If forced to go for a job you don't want, ask the boss lots of questions about the trade union, sick pay, holidays etc.
- Organise in Claimants Unions. If any Claimants Advisers or Restart interviewers harrass claimants, make an official complaint. Get their names and photos and harrass them. Organise regular leafletting, demos and occupations at Benefit Offices, Restart offices and ET Agents.

Leaflets from: SERAWM, c/o Tottenham Claimants Centre, 72 West Green Rd., London N15. Tel. 01 802 9804 ; Lothian Claimants Union, c/o EUWC, 103 Broughton St., Edinburgh Tel. 031 557 0718 ET Workers Group, PO Box 105, Plymouth

- 35 ET 'trainees' on a scheme near Bridgewater in Somerset recently struck against their working week being increased from 4 to 5 days. After 6 weeks they won when their bosses backed down completely. (Info: Plymouth Claimants Union)

Cynical Government manipulation led to the deployment of troops in London on 8th November. The ambulance drivers' 'Work to Rule' had been maintained despite Management provocation. Despite this the Government had motives to misrepresent the Emergency cover given and activate Contingency Plan "Bittern" to use 51 Army & RAF Ambulances and crews and create a crisis of their own making.

The Government has designs to 'hive-off' non-emergency work to private services and restrict Ambulance crews to 'Emergency' work after scaling down the number of workers. In 1979 new contingency plans were set in place, including the code-named "Concord" plan to forcefully requisition Ambulances and put them to troop use. Successive Labour & Tory Governments have used troops in 1975 (Glasgow Dustmen); 1977 (Firemen); 1981 (Prisons); 1981 & 1982 (Ambulances); 1981 (Civil Servants in Coulpport Naval Base) during STRIKES.

The Ambulance staff have widespread support and such draconian intervention in industrial disputes will only stimulate wider class solidarity against Thatcher's crumbling regime.



## POLISH DISCONTENT: ANARCHIST BANNERS AT WARSAW TOWN HALL, MAY DAY

COUNTER INFORMATION, PIGEONHOLE CL, C/O 11 FORTH STREET, EDINBURGH, EH1 UK.

For further information on local CI distribution and other local

activities write: For the north of England - Red and Black, c/o Raven Press, 75 Piccadilly, Manchester. For the west of Scotland - Glasgow anarchists, PO Box 239, Glasgow G5 0LW. This issue went to press on 6th November 1989

FED UP OF BEING ORDERED ABOUT AND EXPLOITED? Sick of living in poverty while the profit system benefits a powerful few? Angry about men oppressing women? Disgusted at the many other injustices in today's society? You're not alone. Lots of people round the globe are not only fed up, they're fighting back. In Counter Information we report this often-censored resistance, to encourage more such activity. We stress the importance of people directly controlling their struggles, outside the control of political parties, trade unions or any leaders. Replacing one set of rulers with another - as has happened in the 'Communist' Party-ruled regimes, and as left-wing parties and national liberation movements want - is no solution. We encourage today's resistance to aim for the complete overthrow of all relationships whereby some people oppress others. The world's resources should be owned and controlled by all, and used to satisfy human needs. The Counter Information collective invites people to - send us articles and information - take bundles of the news-sheet to distribute - make a much needed donation towards our printing and postage costs - write for info on our CI collective. We wish to co-operate with all who share our aims.